

VIOLATING THE SACRED TRUST: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**VIOLATING THE SACRED TRUST: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN INITIAL ENTRY
TRAINING**

by

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ABSTRACT

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In November 1997, a sex scandal involving drill sergeants and their recruits completely shook the American public's confidence in the Army. The Army strictly forbids relationships between drill sergeants and new recruits, and our military views this issue as one of the most highly charged moral issues within the services. Violation of this special trust and responsibility erodes the American public's confidence in the military, may negatively impact female recruitment, and embeds sexual harassment within the Army culture. Although the Army took aggressive steps to rectify this problem, incidents involving drill sergeants continue to plague the training base. This SRP demonstrates these incidents have steadily increased since 2001.

This SRP examines the issue of sexual harassment in Initial Entry Training (IET). It identifies factors associated with this behavior, discusses sexual harassment in the overall Army culture, and provides recommendations for deterring sexual harassment within the Army and the training base. This SRP concludes with speculation that sexual harassment persists within the Army culture because of leadership failures. Because of

this cultural problem and failures of leadership, the sexual misconduct of drill sergeants persists at an alarming rate.

VIOLATING THE SACRED TRUST: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING

In November 1997, a sex scandal involving drill sergeants and their recruits completely shook the American public's confidence in the Army. The most far-reaching scandal to hit the military to date, the Aberdeen training incident, threatened to undermine the structural foundation of the Army---the chain of command. The Army's response to this incident raised serious concerns about the Army's ability to police itself. The majority of cases involved relationships that occurred between recruits and their direct supervisors within the same company. This abuse of authority violates one of the cardinal rules of the military which forbids consensual sex between a superior and subordinate in the same chain of command. More importantly, however, is the fact that the Army strictly forbids relationships between drill sergeants and new recruits; our military views this issue as one of the most highly charged moral issues within the services.¹ The drill sergeants' duties include the responsibility to mold vulnerable young men and women—America's sons and daughters—into Soldiers. The drill sergeants' authority is nearly absolute, falling somewhere between “loco parentis and God.”² According to MG Robert Shadely, former Commander of Aberdeen's Ordnance Center and School, “drill sergeants are the stewards of a special trust and responsibility and we must ensure that they do not abuse their power.”³ Violation of this special trust and responsibility erodes the American public's confidence in the military, may negatively impact female recruitment, and embeds sexual harassment within the Army culture. Although the Army took aggressive steps to rectify this problem, incidents involving

sexual misconduct by drill sergeants have continued to increase at an alarming rate since 2001.

This SRP examines sexual harassment in Initial Entry Training (IET) to identify factors associated with this behavior. It describes the process of embedding sexual harassment into the overall Army culture and offers recommendations for deterring sexual harassment within the Army, especially its training base. This SRP theorizes that sexual harassment is sustained within the Army culture due to leadership failures and the persistence of sexual misconduct in the training base.

The data and analysis of this SRP may assist Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) in reducing sexual misconduct within the training base. This SRP may also assist the Army in determining effective methods to combat sexual harassment within the ranks.

Background

In the last fifteen years, DoD has conducted over eighteen major studies of sexual misconduct in the armed services. All of these surveys indicate sexual harassment is a serious problem in the Army. Despite lessons learned and leaders' declarations to take corrective action, many of the same problems identified in earlier investigations appear to remain unresolved. Sexual misconduct continues to plague the military, to include the training base, at alarming rates as indicated in DoD's 2004 Task Force Report on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault.⁴ Since 15% of the current military population is female⁵ and increasing, the problem of sexual harassment is unlikely to disappear.

Overview of Reports / Studies

The Army realized the seriousness of sexual harassment taking place within the ranks when more than twelve female trainees at the U.S. Army Ordnance School at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland reported sexual abuse by their drill sergeants. Allegations of abuse quickly spread to other training installations, leading Army leaders to conclude that sexual harassment was a widespread problem in the training base. Because of the Aberdeen sexual misconduct scandal, DoD and the Army initiated four major studies to assess the extent of and factors associated with sexual harassment in IET.

The Secretary of the Army Senior Review Panel on Sexual Harassment was the most comprehensive of the four studies; it provided the most detail on sexual harassment in IET. The panel determined sexual harassment was not only an issue throughout the Army, but was also an issue in IET. Trainees in Basic Combat Training (BCT) and One Station Unit Training (OSUT) experienced a lower rate of sexual harassment while trainees in Advanced Individual Training (AIT) phase of IET experienced a much higher rate of sexual harassment than the rest of the Army.⁶ 42% of female recruits identified other trainees as the source of sexual harassment and 27% of female recruits identified drill sergeants as the harassers. Most harassment occurred either during training or in the barracks. Table 1 depicts the extent of sexual harassment taking place in IET.⁷

1997 SENIOR REVIEW PANEL: TRAINEE RESPONSES : EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS IN THE DIFFERENT TRAINING COMPONENTS					
EXPERIENCED BEHAVIOR	IET				ARMY
	BCT	OSUT	AIT	TOTAL IET	
SEXUAL HARASSMENT	15%	15%	30%	24%	22%
CRUDE BEHAVIOR	64%	74%	82%	75%	78%
SEXIST BEHAVIOR	56%	65%	71%	65%	72%
UNWANTED SEXUAL ATTENTION	27%	33%	50%	41%	47%
COERCION	3%	4%	13%	10%	15%
ASSAULT	2%	3%	5%	4%	7%

Table 1: 1997 Sexual Harassment Survey Results

Overall, the panel's assessment indicated the Army was well aware of this problem. The panel concluded that passive leadership allowed sexual harassment to persist not only in the training base but also throughout the Army.⁸ Major findings indicated a lack of dignity and respect for females in the IET environment; abuse of power was a recurring theme in the sexual harassment cases; the challenge of consensual sexual relationships between drill sergeant and trainees was an emerging issue; there are insufficient female drill sergeants to serve as role models for recruits; and the training base is severely under-resourced to accomplish the changing mission.⁹

The Department of the Army Inspector General (DAIG) Special Inspection of Initial Entry Training Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures found that in all drill sergeant / trainee sexual misconduct cases, the drill sergeants abused their authority and failed to maintain expected professionalism, self-discipline, and appropriate standards of conduct. The DAIG confirmed the importance of assigning more female drill sergeants to deter sexual harassment and the DAIG acknowledged that the absence of company executive officers inhibited the ability of the Company Commander and 1SG to provide adequate command presence at training sites and in the barracks.¹⁰

All studies recommended implementation of a more comprehensive drill sergeant screening process, to include psychological testing, family stability checks, and a thorough review of records, including law enforcement and security records; increasing the number of female drill sergeants to serve as role models;¹¹ improving values training in IET; and improving training base manning to ensure compliance with TRADOC drill sergeant-to-trainer ratios.¹² As a result of these studies, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 directed several reforms in the drill sergeant selection and training process.¹³

Based on recommendations from these studies, the Army and TRADOC implemented several changes to deter sexual harassment and abuses of power by drill sergeants. First, the Drill Sergeant School revised its program of instruction to include additional sexual harassment training, and additional training scenarios to better prepare drill sergeants for the gender-integrated training environment. Also, the revised program provided drill sergeant candidates training opportunities with recruits prior to assuming drill sergeant duties. The Army revised AR 614-200, *Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management*, to require a more comprehensive screening process for all drill sergeant candidates. TRADOC increased female drill sergeant authorizations in BCT, OSUT, and AIT. The Army increased IET personnel authorizations, adding a company executive officer and a battalion chaplain. Finally, TRADOC extended BCT by one week to allow for additional values training.

Despite these aggressive steps taken by the Army and TRADOC, along with an increased sensitivity to abuses of power by drill sergeants, drill sergeant sexual misconduct persists in the training environment.

Policies and Guidance

Sexual harassment violates both federal law and Army regulations. Sexual harassment violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which governs harassment in the work place and recognizes two types of sexual harassment. Quid pro quo occurs when a supervisor or superior bases an employment benefit or continuing employment on a subordinate's acceptance of unwelcome sexual behavior. This type of sexual harassment includes implicit or explicit threats of adverse action if the person does not submit to such conditions and promises of favorable action if the person submits to sexual demands. Incidents of quid pro quo may also have harassing effects on third persons when the incidents result in favoritism or general discrimination, causing the third employee to feel unfairly considered for recognition, advancement, or career opportunities.¹⁴ The second type of sexual harassment occurs in a hostile environment. In such environments, Soldiers or civilians are subjected to offensive, unwanted, and unsolicited comments or behavior of a sexual nature to the extent of interfering with their job performance.¹⁵ In the IET environment, the quid pro quo type of sexual harassment is more prevalent than the hostile environment. The Army also uses the term sexual misconduct to describe a form of sexual harassment taking place in the IET.¹⁶

AR 600-20, *Army Command Policy*, clearly outlines the Army's sexual harassment policy:

The policy of the Army is that sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. Army leadership at all levels will be committed to creating and maintaining an environment conducive to maximum productivity and respect for human dignity. Sexual harassment destroys teamwork and negatively affects combat readiness. The Army bases its success on mission accomplishment. Successful mission accomplishment

can be achieved only in an environment free of sexual harassment for all personnel. AR 600-20 defines sexual harassment as:

Sexual harassment is a form of gender discrimination that involves unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature between the same or opposite genders when—

- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, career, or
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Any person in a supervisory or command position who uses or condones implicit or explicit sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, pay, or job of a Soldier or civilian employee is engaging in sexual harassment. Similarly, any Soldier or civilian employee who makes deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature is engaging in sexual harassment.¹⁷

Initial Entry Training Environment (IET)

TRADOC's mission is to provide competent Soldiers who are ready to fight the nation's wars. TRADOC trains approximately 80,000 new recruits a year which includes approximately 20,000 female recruits (20%).¹⁸ IET includes Basic Combat Training (BCT), Advanced Individual Training (AIT), One Station Unit Training (OSUT), and any other training a Soldier may need before receiving a Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). BCT and OSUT units with female Soldiers assigned along with all AIT units conduct gender-integrated training at the squad level.¹⁹

AR 600-20 prohibits trainer and Soldier relationships. Specifically, this section states: "Any relationship between permanent party personnel and initial entry training

(IET) trainees not required by the training mission is prohibited. Violations of this guidance may be punished under Article 92, UCMJ as a violation of a lawful general regulation.”²⁰

TRADOC Regulation 350-6

TRADOC Regulation 350-6, *Initial Entry Training Policies and Administration*, provides the execution guidance for IET. This comprehensive regulation is the “Bible” for conducting initial entry training. This document covers everything from general philosophy to detailed implementing instructions on how to transform a civilian into a Soldier. TRADOC Regulation 350-6 describes the type of environment for executing training, describes the role and expected standard of conduct for drill sergeants, and explains how to control a recruit’s life as part of the socialization process into the Army. This regulation also identifies prohibited practices which are punitive in nature. Offenders are subject to disciplinary action.

TRADOC Regulation 350-6 Prohibitions

Civilians entering the Army place their trust in TRADOC to provide high standards of training, professional leadership, and military discipline while transforming them into Soldiers. Trainee abuse undermines this trust by violating Army values, creates a hostile environment not conducive to training, and disrupts the good order and discipline within the unit. TRADOC Regulation 350-6, paragraph 2-3 (b) states:

Sexual harassment, fraternization, or inappropriate or unprofessional relationships are explicitly forbidden IAW AR 600-20 and may violate local regulations. These offenses are punishable under UCMJ.

1) A prohibited relationship is any relationship between permanent party and IET Soldiers that is not required by the training mission and is prohibited by AR 600-20, paragraph 4-15. This definition includes and is

not limited to dating IET Soldiers, writing personal letters/emails, having personal telephone conversations unrelated to the training mission, playing cards, gambling, dancing, entertaining in a personal residence, sharing accommodations in a hotel/motel, transporting in a POV or any other conduct of a personal or sexual nature.

2) Trainee Abuse is any improper or unlawful physical, verbal, or sexual act against a trainee (definition does not include trainee against trainee). Examples might include assault, extreme physical training not IAW POI, extreme profanity, sodomy, rape, sexual harassment, extortion of money, or any personal relationship that is not required by the training mission."²¹

Sexual Harassment Still a Problem

Historically, most trainee abuse has involved physical or verbal abuse. However, recent trends indicate trainee abuse involving sexual misconduct has steadily increased since 2001. Statistics obtained from TRADOC's Office of the Staff Judge Advocate (SJA), the office responsible for tracking trainee abuse incidents, indicates sexual misconduct issues continue to plague the training base. Data for FY01-FY07 from all TRADOC training installations indicate that approximately 50% of the trainee abuse allegations for FY 01, FY 02, FY 06 and FY07 involve sexual misconduct of drill sergeants. More alarming is the fact that 68% of all trainee abuse allegations for FY 07 involve drill sergeant sexual misconduct. Since 2004, drill sergeant sexual misconduct allegations increased each year (42% FY05, 55% FY06, and 68% FY07).²² It is important to note that these statistics indicate allegations only; they do not indicate confirmed cases of misconduct because the TRADOC SJA does not maintain visibility on the outcome of court-martial or Article 15 proceedings. However, data analysis from the two largest gender-integrated training bases clearly shows that since FY03, credible sexual misconduct cases have led all other trainee abuse statistics. In fact, in FY07 the

number of sexual misconduct cases by drill sergeants was almost triple than all other training abuse categories.²³

In the IET environment, most sexually related offenses involve consensual sex, which is not regarded as criminal behavior in the civilian justice system. The majority of sexually related offenses involve female recruits and their male drill sergeants or instructors. The military justice system strictly forbids these types of relationships since they are detrimental to the good order and discipline of the organization. During the Aberdeen court martial proceedings, Army prosecutors introduced the concept of “constructive force,” which demonstrated the extreme power differential between drill sergeants and trainees.²⁴ In the IET environment, even consensual sex is deemed rape if the recruit demonstrates she was afraid to say no to her superior.²⁵ Why is there an increase in sexual harassment in the training base? After the Aberdeen sex scandal, the Army implemented procedures to deter sexual misconduct by drill sergeants and other training cadre. Next, we will examine the IET training environment and culture to determine factors that may lead to sexual harassment by the training cadre, primarily the drill sergeants.

Why does Sexual Misconduct Persist?

Interviews conducted with over 28 current and former IET leaders, which included drill sergeants through battalion level command teams, revealed four possible reasons for the increase in drill sergeants’ sexual misconduct: The drill sergeant selection process is not rigorous enough; IET manning and structure is inadequate for the IET mission; inexperienced junior leaders are inadequately prepared for the IET environment; and recruits’ values have changed.²⁶

Drill Sergeant Selection Process

Approximately 80% of IET leaders interviewed indicated that the drill sergeant screening and selection process is not rigorous enough to eliminate candidates who lack the leadership experience, maturity, and professionalism to serve as IET drill sergeants. Those interviewed believe that HQDA was issuing more waivers to candidates who failed to meet the minimum qualifications or had Type 2 unfavorable information in their background. Interviewees also believed that IET no longer received the best qualified candidates to serve as drill sergeants because the Army is assigning its best Soldiers to Iraq and Afghanistan.

AR 614-200, *Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management*, provides guidance on the management, screening, and selection process for the drill sergeant program. The majority of NCOs selected for drill sergeant duties are DA selected, so they do not volunteer for this assignment. AR 614-200 outlines the prerequisites a candidate must meet to serve as an IET drill sergeant. Three key prerequisites are:

- The candidate must demonstrate the necessary leadership ability and potential to serve in positions of increasing responsibility. Previous assignments and performance appraisals provide the basis for this assessment.
- The candidate must successfully complete a Commander's Evaluation conducted by a LTC or higher to ensure the Soldier meets the prerequisites. The Commander's Evaluation provides an assessment of the total Soldier by considering such things as demonstrated leadership ability and potential, character / integrity, family stability, ability to perform under pressure, and adverse actions against the Soldiers.

- Human Resources Command (HRC) conducts an extensive background screening on all drill sergeant candidates to determine a candidate's suitability to serve in this sensitive duty position. Background checks include a medical and mental health screening, personnel security and criminal records check, and a family advocacy screening.

Candidates are disqualified from performing drill sergeant duties based on unfavorable information discovered during the background checks. Type 1 reports permanently exclude a candidate from drill sergeant duties. Type 1 disqualifications include such matters as the candidates' history of sexual harassment; moderate or severe assault, spouse abuse or child abuse; indecent acts with a minor; incest, adultery; sexual activity with a subordinate Soldier; fraternization; prior court – martial conviction; and any repeated Type 2 offenses. Type 2 reports do not preclude a candidate from drill sergeant duties as long as the offense was not committed within the last five years. Type 2 reports include such offenses as DUI; mild assault; spouse abuse or child abuse; drug offenses; theft; or traffic violation resulting in loss of six points or more.²⁷

Disqualified candidates have the right to submit an appeal to the Commander, HRC, Enlisted Background Screening Section. The Director, Enlisted Personnel Management Division (EPMD), is the approval authority for all waivers. Since the majority of NCOs do not volunteer for this assignment, most do not submit a waiver when disqualified from performing duties as a drill sergeant. Data provided by HRC Drill Sergeant Team highlighted that both Type 1 and Type 2 background failures have steadily increased since FY98. In the last three years (FY05-FY07), the highest number

of Type 1 and Type 2 failures has been reported. These three years also saw a noticeable increase in the number of waivers approved by the Director of EPMD. Although there was an increase in the waivers issued in FY05-FY07, there is insufficient data available to conclude that the drill sergeant screening, selection, and waiver process contributed to the increase in drill sergeant sexual misconduct incidents taking place in IET.

Inadequate IET Manning and Structure

All 28 IET leaders interviewed strongly voiced concerns that the existing IET manning structure was inadequate for the current IET mission. Specifically, interviewees highlighted three areas of concern. First, the drill sergeant-to-trainee ratio routinely exceeds TRADOC limits. Secondly, insufficient female drill sergeants negatively impact the training mission. Finally, all interviewed claimed that the IET manning structure is inadequate to accomplish all tasks as required in the revised BCT POI.

So units remain under-resourced to perform the mission of training Soldiers. Accordingly, units routinely exceed the TRADOC limits for drill sergeant-to-recruit ratios for BCT, AIT, and OSUT. TRADOC Regulation 350-16, *Drill Sergeant Program*, resources BCT and OSUT with twelve drill sergeants per company in order to sustain a drill sergeant-to-trainee ratio of 1 drill sergeant to 17-20 trainees. AIT drill sergeant-to-trainee ratio is 1 drill sergeant to 30 trainees.²⁸ Despite these specified goals, the IET interviewees stated ratios for BCT and OSUT reach as high as 1 drill sergeant to 45 trainees and AIT drill sergeant to trainee ratios routinely average 1 drill sergeant to 80 trainees-- and on numerous occasions average 1 drill sergeant to 120 trainees.²⁹ During the 2007 TRADOC Commander's Conference held at Ft. Benning, installations

reported to the Deputy TRADOC Commander that exceeding TRADOC limits for drill sergeant-to-trainee ratios resulted in unacceptable risk to the training mission.³⁰ IET interviewees believed exceeding the drill sergeant-to-trainee ratio contributes to drill sergeants' sexual misconduct. Unit leaders believed there were insufficient leaders available to effectively deter sexual misconduct, especially female drill sergeants.

The second contributing factor to sexual harassment in IET results from the fact that female recruits are the minority in a male-dominated environment and there are insufficient female drill sergeants to serve as role models and as deterrent to sexual harassment. The DAIG Special Inspection cited the contributions of female drill sergeants as possible deterrents to sexual misconduct.³¹ This function of female drill sergeants was also recognized by over 90% of IET interviewees.³² From FY01 through FY06, the female drill sergeant population reached no higher than 13% of the total drill sergeant population, where as the female recruit population averaged between 15-20% of the total recruit population. The Army's FY07 female drill sergeant requirement is 15% of the total drill sergeant population, and the FY08 projected female drill requirement increases to 18% of the total drill sergeant population.³³ Although FY07 and FY08 female drill sergeant requirements provide adequate representation of the 20% female recruit population, there is a shortage of female drill sergeants in gender-integrated training units. For example, the largest gender integrated training base, Fort Jackson, only had 78% of their female drill sergeant authorizations filled in August 2007. HRC projected an 83% fill rate for Fort Jackson female drill sergeant authorization within the next nine months.³⁴ The likelihood of sexual harassment increases when women are devalued and there are insufficient role models serving in key leader

positions.³⁵ BG Foote, the first female Brigadier General at the DAIG's office recognized that sexual harassment / misconduct by military leaders, especially drill sergeants in IET, can have severe implications throughout military organizations and the Army culture. Military leaders, especially drill sergeants, create an environment that condones sexual harassment when they degrade and belittle women in front of subordinates or other recruits.³⁶

The increased Operational tempo (OPTEMPO) caused by the implementation of the revised BCT POI coupled with chronic personnel shortages is another contributing factor to the increased sexual harassment in IET. Recent changes to the BCT POI increased the number of tasks a Soldier must perform in the nine-week BCT period. However, the length of BCT remained the same, so drill sergeants must work longer hours to meet the standard. TRADOC is currently considering a recommendation to add one week to BCT, which should alleviate this problem. In addition to the increased OPTEMPO caused by the revised POI, support personnel positions including supply and company executive officer (XO) positions remain unfilled for long periods. This places additional demands on the drill sergeants to fill the void; it also impacts on the commanders' ability set the command climate of the unit through their presence at training sites and in the barracks.

Inexperienced IET Commanders

The majority of senior IET leaders interviewed cited inexperienced junior leaders and inadequate training for company leadership as contributing factors to the increase in drill sergeants' misconduct in IET. Personnel problems continue to plague the training base. This issue has arisen following revised HQDA manning guidance which places

TRADOC behind deploying units and priority missions for priority-of-fill. IET Company Commander / XO positions remain a HQDA priority fill mission, with a goal of 100% fill of authorized positions. However, junior company grade officers who lack leadership experience and who are inadequately prepared for command are commanding IET companies. At several installations, lieutenants are commanding IET companies because of a shortage of captains. In August 2007, the current fill for Captains in TRADOC was 74%, with no significant improvement anticipated in the foreseeable future. HRC requested TRADOC be more receptive to placing more junior officers, such as 1LTs coming off one-year tours in IET commands and newly commissioned 2LTs as XOs in IET companies.³⁷ Senior IET leaders interviewed reported that the practice of placing junior Captains and 1LTs in IET commands contributed to the increase in drill sergeant misconduct cases because these leaders lacked the leadership experience, maturity, and knowledge required to recognize the indicators of potential sexual misconduct issues. The DAIG Special Inspection report stated that company leadership teams failed to recognize potential sexual misconduct issues because they failed to understand the warning signs. Further, they did not understand the importance of establishing a positive command climate with a zero tolerance of sexual harassment.³⁸ According to Colonel Sando, IET Company Commanders should be selected on the basis of proven leadership abilities since they have the critical responsibility of creating a positive command environment for both the drill sergeants and the new recruits. He further suggested that IET companies should be second command opportunities for captains with demonstrated proven leadership abilities.³⁹

This Generation of Recruits

The final contributing factor to the increase in drill sergeant sexual misconduct identified by the interviewed IET leaders is the values and characteristics of the X and Y generations. The challenges associated with training today's youth in a highly disciplined, structured IET environment challenges TRADOC. In the IET environment, most sexual offenses involve consensual sex between the drill sergeant and the recruit. Today's recruits exhibit liberal attitudes toward sex and do not subscribe to Army rules that forbid sex between a superior and a subordinate. Today's youth have casual attitudes toward sexual activities, underage and reckless alcohol use, and illegal drug use. The Center for Disease Control found that over 60% of 12th grade males and females had sexual intercourse. Among these 12th graders, 18% of the girls and 22% of boys already had four or more sexual partners.⁴⁰

The highly structured IET environment regulates virtually every aspect of recruits' behavior. This environment sharply contrasts with the prevailing American youth culture. A Department of Defense Inspector General (DoD IG) report found more than 50% of cadets attending the three military academies would violate Academy rules if they would not get caught. The DoD IG assessed that cadets chose to ignore regulations, especially those unique to the Academies, because they did not understand the importance of these regulations in maintaining good order and military discipline.⁴¹ Today's young American does not readily embrace Army values, which may account for inappropriate relationships between superiors and subordinates. These characteristics may explain why female recruits have consensual sex with drill sergeants, even though they know this behavior violates Army values. But, there are other factors that converge in the training base that makes this environment high risk for sexual harassment.

Additional Contributing Factors

The Senior Review Panel determined the IET environment was conducive to abuse of authority and sexual harassment for several reasons. First, drill sergeants autonomously occupy positions of the highest authority; they enjoy great respect. Drill sergeants control every aspect of the recruit's life 24 hours a day / 7 days a week. Secondly, recruits use their chain of command to solve a problem, and drill sergeants are the recruit's chain of command. This situation creates a power imbalance which becomes a breeding ground for trainee abuse, especially sexual harassment. Next, a recruit may not know how to escape the control of drill sergeants or how to report harassment. The recruit is isolated from normal support systems of family and friends, is in the process of making new friends, and is not comfortable stepping outside the chain of command. The IET environment is especially susceptible to the quid pro quo type of sexual harassment, since drill sergeants exercise total control over the recruits.

The second condition that facilitates drill sergeants' sexual misconduct is peer loyalty to those who train Soldiers. Peer loyalty is strong within the IET environment, especially among drill sergeants. Loyalty is valued in the military—one of the seven core Army values. TRADOC defines loyalty as “the faithful adherence to a person, unit, or Army. It is the thread that binds our actions together and causes us to support each other, our superior, our family, and our country.”⁴² Peer loyalty is a positive attribute until it shields improper behavior. Peer loyalty can cause drill sergeants to ignore trainee abuse and rationalize the behavior as trivial or as required to train Soldiers—even if the behavior clearly violates TRADOC Reg 350-6. This is especially true in terms of sexually harassing behavior. The Senior Review Panel noted some drill sergeants were committing acts of sexual harassment as well as failing to set the proper example by not

correcting inappropriate behavior in trainees.⁴³ Charles Moskos, a military sociologist at Northwestern University, cannot believe that other drill sergeants were not aware of sexual misconduct taking place in the IET environment.⁴⁴ The DAIG also identified peer loyalty as a facilitator to sexual harassment because the training cadre created a command climate that avoided peer enforcement of standards.⁴⁵ Drill sergeants have the obligation to police other drill sergeants who violate regulations, fail to live by Army values, and abuse their authority.

Impact of Trainee Abuse

As described above, numerous factors converge in IET to create high risks for sexual harassment. Although sexual harassment occurs in the training base, some may argue that the rate of occurrence is negligible when compared to the number of Soldiers trained without incident. This may be true; however, if we focus only on the rate of occurrence, then we have missed the bigger picture of the true impacts of sexual harassment on the Army culture: First, sexual harassment directly conflicts with Army values and is detrimental to good order and military discipline. Secondly and more importantly, this behavior of IET leaders, specifically drill sergeants, promotes an environment that tolerates sexual harassment, instills this behavior into future Soldiers, and embeds this inappropriate behavior into the Army culture.

Soldierization Process

According to Edgar H. Schein, basic assumptions and established beliefs are the foundation of any culture. Members of the culture are responsible for maintaining and transmitting the values and behavioral norms of the culture.⁴⁶ Schein's concept of organizational socialization is defined as "a process by which a new member learns the

value system, the norms, and the required behavior patterns of the organization.”⁴⁷ IET uses the Soldierization process to achieve organizational socialization of new recruits. The Soldierization process is TRADOC’s strategy for transforming civilians into tactically and technically competent Soldiers. An effective Soldierization process reinforces what is important in the Army culture and prepares the recruits for what they will experience in their first assignments.

Initial phases of the Soldierization process involve total control of recruits by training cadre, including withholding privileges. Total control requires continuous supervision by the cadre and restriction of the recruits to the company area.⁴⁸ Upon entry into IET, recruits lose the privileges normally associated with civilian and normal Army life. Recruits cannot use their cell phones, listen to music, play video games, or call home at their leisure. The withdrawal of privileges ensures the drill sergeant can demonstrate and enforce Army standards of discipline and conduct for young recruits.⁴⁹ As recruits demonstrate their ability and to adhere to Army standards, privileges are gradually restored. IET thus uses drill sergeants to serve as role models and transmitters of the Army culture.⁵⁰

Role of the Drill Sergeant

While serving as the Army Chief of Staff, General Dennis Reimer claimed that, “Drill Sergeants do more than just touch our Army—they make it.”⁵¹ Research affirms that drill sergeants are the single most important individuals in assimilating recruits into the Army because they represent everything about the Army in the eyes of recruits. According to LTC Hayden, drill sergeants perform three critical functions: they transmit the Army culture to the recruit; they model desired behaviors; and they train recruits on

the required skills to succeed as an Army Soldier.⁵² Drill sergeants serve as role models and demonstrate the beliefs, values, and performance measures consistent with the Army culture.⁵³

Drill sergeants play a critical role in the success of IET training, thus they have a direct impact on the readiness of the Army. So when drill sergeants fail to serve as role models, fail to live by Army values, and fail to correct inappropriate behavior in recruits or peers, it is altogether possible that recruits will internalize inappropriate behavior as a norm of Army culture.⁵⁴ The Senior Review Panel found that the Soldierization process in IET tolerated sexualized behaviors that were inconsistent with instilling respect among all Soldiers as an Army core value.⁵⁵

Current Army Culture

The Army has a cultural problem which is facilitating sexual harassment throughout the Army. Army values do not allow for sexual harassment or misconduct. However, Army culture, which should reinforce Army values, has unfortunately fostered sexual harassment and even a tolerance for sexual misconduct. As highlighted in numerous studies,⁵⁶ Army leadership is well aware that sexual harassment is a problem in the Army and the training base. The residual effects of senior leaders who condone sexual harassment and do not accept the role of women in the Army is impacting on Army culture. In the training base, too many recruits are widely exposed to role models that both commit and tolerate sexual harassment and misconduct.

Although this SRP specifically focused on sexual harassment and misconduct in IET, this topic has broader implications within the Army. The Army's current culture is unhealthy as evident by recent sexual misconduct incidents involving recruiters, service

academy cadets, and reports from both theaters.⁵⁷ Based on this SRP and recent sexual harassment studies, this topic warrants further investigation by the Army.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The process that transforms civilians into Soldiers is highly susceptible to training abuses, specifically drill sergeants' sexual misconduct. This SRP makes no claim that sexual misconduct is spiraling out of control, but it surely shows that sexual misconduct continues to be a challenge in the IET. Major changes to the IET environment, to Army culture, or to the Soldierization process are not necessary. The Army's sexual harassment policy and TRADOC Reg 350-6 guidance appear to be on target for training Soldiers and preventing training abuse. However, examination of the IET environment, culture, and Soldierization process from a sexual harassment perspective sheds insight on possible root causes of the problem. The following recommendations address these root causes:

1. Drill Sergeant Accountability: Changing the existing drill sergeant culture is critical for preventing all forms of trainee abuse and transmitting the correct culture to the Army's newest Soldiers. Drill Sergeants must take personal responsibility for "policing their own" and reporting or confronting those who fail to live by the Army values.
2. Review IET Structure Manning Authorizations: The Army and TRADOC should conduct a comprehensive review of IET manning and structure to ensure authorizations are commensurate with the IET workload. Analysis identified a strong correlation between sexual misconduct by drill sergeants and violations of TRADOC specified goals for drill sergeant-to-recruit ratios. TRADOC should

initiate actions to ensure compliance with TRADOC specified goals for drill sergeant-to-recruit ratios, especially in AIT.

3. Increase female role models serving in IET: TRADOC should initiate actions to increase the number of female drill sergeants serving as role models in IET.

Current authorization levels set forth in TRADOC Reg 350-16 are adequate; however, greater priority should be given to resourcing these authorizations at 100%.

4. Priority for Resourcing: The Army should dedicate personnel resources and make IET an Army priority for fill in order to effectively deter sexual harassment in the IET environment.

- Priority should be given for filling IET company command positions. IET company command positions should be a second command for captains with demonstrated leadership capabilities in a successful first command.
- IET support personnel positions, such as company executive officers, chaplains, and supply personnel, should receive priority of fill.

5. Selection of Drill Sergeants: The Army should continue to select quality NCOs to serve as drill sergeants. NCOs selected to serve as drill sergeants should possess the requisite leadership experience and maturity, must be able to serve as role models, must live by Army values, and must understand they are primarily responsible for transmitting the Army culture to the next generation of Soldiers. Recommend HQDA and TRADOC conduct comprehensive periodic reviews of the drill sergeant selection process, paying close attention to the

waiver process and the number of drill sergeant sexual misconduct incidents to identify any emerging trends in the selection process.

IET provides volunteers with the essential basic skills necessary to survive on the battlefield and inculcates in Soldiers the values and behaviors expected in the Army culture. Values and behaviors internalized by Soldiers are the direct result of the demonstrated leadership and behavior of IET drill sergeants. This SRP validates that sexual harassment continues to challenge the IET environment. It identified key factors that contributed to the increase in drill sergeants' sexual misconduct, and then explained how sexual harassment is embedded into the Army culture by drill sergeants who fail to exhibit appropriate behavior to recruits. The very design of the IET environment and Soldierization process fosters trainee abuse, specifically sexual harassment by drill sergeants. Trainee abuse completely undermines the Soldierization process and may result in Soldiers internalizing inappropriate behaviors and values as they depart for their first assignments. Commanders at all levels share responsibility for successful execution of IET and for creating an environment of zero tolerance for sexual harassment and misconduct. Strict adherence to standards published in Army regulations and policies is fundamentally important for establishing a positive command climate in IET; this compliance reinforces true Army values. It is imperative that Army leaders, especially drill sergeants, transmit to recruits a strong message: The Army will not tolerate sexual harassment or sexual misconduct.

Endnotes

¹ Elizabeth Gleick, "Scandal in the Military," *Time*, 25 November 1996, 28.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, Care for Victims of Sexual Assault Task Force, *Task Force Report on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, April 2004), viii. This report hereafter cited as DOD TF 2004 Sexual Assault Report.

⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff G1, FY06 Army Profile—Army Demographics as of 30 September 2006.

⁶ U.S. Department of the Army, Secretary of the Army, *Secretary of the Army's Senior Review Panel on Sexual Harassment*, (Washington, D.C.: Secretary of the Army, July 1997), 53-54. This report hereafter cited as SECARMY Senior Review Panel.

⁷ Ibid., 78-80.

⁸ Ibid., 2-3 and 77.

⁹ Ibid., 77-80.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of the Army Inspector General, *Special Inspection of Initial Entry Training Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 22 July 1997), iv. This report hereafter cited as DAIG Special Inspection Report.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Defense, Federal Advisory Committee on Gender-Integrated Training and Related Issues, *Report of the Federal Advisory Committee on Gender-Integrated Training and Related Issues to the Secretary of Defense* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 16 December 1997), 23. This report hereafter cited as SECDEF Federal Advisory Committee.

¹² SECARMY Senior Review Panel, 23.

¹³ U.S. Congress, House National Security Committee, *Sexual Misconduct in the Military: A Congressional Review (Interim Report)* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Congress, 25 June 1997), 7. This report hereafter cited as House National Security Committee Interim Report.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Command Policy*, Army Regulation 600-20 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 7 June 2006), 64-65. Hereafter cited as AR 600-20.

¹⁵ Ibid., 65.

¹⁶ DoD Instruction 5505.8 defines sexual misconduct as a term used to address UCMJ offenses involving sexual acts between consenting adults in private. In a legal sense, sexual misconduct denotes a person in position of authority and includes any particular sexual activity between him/her and one of his/her subordinates. While such activity is usually not explicitly illegal, it is often against professional codes of ethics.

¹⁷ AR 600-20, 70.

¹⁸ U.S. Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff G1, FY06 Army Profile—Army Demographics as of 30 September 2006.

¹⁹ U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), *Initial Entry Training (IET) Policies and Administration*, TRADOC Regulation 350-6 (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 8 May 2007), 32. Hereafter cited at TRADOC Reg 350-6.

²⁰ AR 600-20, 32.

²¹ TRADOC Reg 350-6, 27-28.

²² U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Staff Judge Advocate, email message to author, subject: Reply (Request for Support—Trainee Abuse Information), 21 November 2007.

²³ Fort Leonard Wood and Fort Jackson Training Abuse Statistics, FY03-07, email message to author, subject: Reply (Request for Support—Trainee Abuse Information), 23 October 2007. Data obtained highlighted that the number of credible drill sergeant sexual misconduct cases tripled from FY03 (10) to FY 06 (33) and since FY04 the number of credible sexual misconduct cases led all other categories of credible training abuse categories.

²⁴ Leora N. Rosen, "Personality Characteristics That Increase Vulnerability to Sexual Harassment among U.S. Army Soldiers," *Military Medicine*, October 2000, 2.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ The author interviewed over 28 current and former IET leaders. Interviewees consisted of 7 Battalion Commanders (3 x Basic Combat Training (BCT), 2 x Advanced Individual Training (AIT), and 2 x One Station Unit Training (OSUT)); 5 Battalion Command Sergeant Majors (1 x BCT, 2 x AIT, and 2 x OSUT); 2 Brigade Command Sergeant Majors (1 x BCT and 1 x CSM w/ both AIT and OSUT); 6 x Company Company Commanders & First Sergeant (2 x BCT, 3 x OSUT, and 1 x AIT); and 8 x DS (3 x BCT, 3 x OSUT, and 2 x AIT). The author also conducted an interview with a former female drill sergeant who was sexually abused as a private while attending BCT.

²⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, *Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management*, Army Regulation 614-200 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 14 February 2007), 78-79. Hereafter cited as AR 614-200.

²⁸ U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), *Drill Sergeant Program*, TRADOC Regulation 350-16 (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 16 February 2005), 16. Hereafter cited at TRADOC Reg 350-16.

²⁹ Personal Interviews conducted with Battalion level command teams October 2007-January 2008.

³⁰ Author participated in this Conference as part of the Center of Excellence Redesign Initiative. At this Conference, GEN Wallace approved the MANSCEN proposal for 3 Brigade construct versus the TRADOC DCSR 2 Brigade proposal based on risk associated with drill sergeant to trainee ratios and C2 span of control.

- ³¹ DAIG Special Inspection Report, 4-3.
- ³² Personal interviews conducted by author October 2007 – January 2008.
- ³³ Human Resources Command, Drill Sergeant Team, email message to author, subject: Reply (Background Failures Since '97), 11 February 2008.
- ³⁴ Human Resources Command Update to Initial Military Forum (IMT) Training Forum, *Force Stabilization and Manning the Force*, 21 August 2007, Slide number 18.
- ³⁵ Celia Morris, *Bearing Witness: Sexual Harassment and Beyond—Every Woman's Story* (New York: Little Brown and Company, 1994), 179.
- ³⁶ T.S. Nelson. *For Love of Country: Confronting Rape and Sexual Harassment in the U.S. Military* (Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Maltreatment and Trauma Press, 2002), 277.
- ³⁷ Briefing Presented at the TRADOC Commander's Initial Military Training Conference. Title of Briefing: Assistance Visits & IMT CMDTs/ Bde Cdrs/CSM Forum Take Away Brief presented on 23 August 2007, Slide 14.
- ³⁸ DAIG Special Inspection Report, 6-21.
- ³⁹ Donald M. Sando, *Band of Brothers-Warrior Ethos, Unit Effectiveness and the Role of Initial Entry Training*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 19 March 2004), 9-10.
- ⁴⁰ Center for Disease Control, "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2003," *CDC Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report* 53, SS-2 (2204): 1-29.
- ⁴¹ U.S. Department of Defense Task Force, *Task Force Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, June 2005), 8. This report hereafter cited as DOD TF Report on Military Academies.
- ⁴² U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, TRADOC Press Release available from <http://www-tradoc.army.mil/PAO/ArmyValues.htm>; Internet; accessed 9 November 2007.
- ⁴³ SECARMY Senior Review Panel, 79.
- ⁴⁴ Jon Jeter and Dana Preist, "Absolute Authorities: Drill Sergeants Shoulder Great Power and Responsibility." *The Washington Post*, 14 November 1996, A1.
- ⁴⁵ DAIG Special Inspection Report, 6-21.
- ⁴⁶ Mary Jo Hatch, *Organizational Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 214-216.
- ⁴⁷ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 2d ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1992), 229.
- ⁴⁸ TRADOC Reg 350-6, 137.

⁴⁹ TRADOC Reg 350-6, 15-16.

⁵⁰ Harrison M. Trice and Janice M. Beyer, *The Cultures of Work Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1993), 137.

⁵¹ COL Christopher T. Fulton, "Drill Sergeants Make the Army and Build Warriors." Commentary in the Fort Sill Oklahoma *Cannoneer*, 30_August 2004.

⁵² Thomas W. Hayden, *Initial Entry Training: Reducing First Term Attrition Through Effective Organizational Socialization*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 10 April 2000), 9.

⁵³ TRADOC Reg 350-6, 14-15.

⁵⁴ Hayden, 7.

⁵⁵ Senior Review Panel, 80.

⁵⁶ DoD has conducted over eighteen studies over the last fifteen years. All studies indicated the Army has a problem with sexual harassment. The 1997 Senior Review Panel on Sexual Harassment and the most recent DoD 2004 Task Force Report on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault indicated that passive leadership facilitated sexual harassment within the Army.

⁵⁷ Information obtained from DoD TF 2004 Sexual Assault Report, DoD's TF 2005 Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies, and a 21 August 2006 Washington Post article titled "Rule Sought to Prevent Abuse by Recruiters" indicate sexual harassment is a widespread issue in the Army and is part of the Army culture. The 21 August 2006 Washington Post article cited an Associated Press investigation that found over 80 military recruiters were disciplined in 2005 for sexual misconduct with potential recruits. Army recruiters led all other services in recruiter sexual misconduct incidents.